



*Image courtesy: Sustrans*

## Managing Streets during Lockdown: School Streets

### Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Fifth in our series on streets during the Corona Virus pandemic. This time we will look at school streets. With schools likely to reopen soon we would like to discuss options for school streets to help ensure pupils and staff can attend safely. What questions, ideas or concerns do you have about supporting school reopening and the use of school streets?

Please watch the video of this event, or look at the presenters' slides, alongside this note.

### Speakers

Dominic Willson, TfL

Fiona Blackley, Sustrans

Rachel Buck, TfL

John Dales, Urban Movement

Sheeba Shetty, TfL

Paul Lavelle, TfL

Gareth James, LB Hounslow

### Takeaways:

- **School streets have traditionally been about restricting traffic to improve safety and air quality.** But at this time we need school streets to create extra space for social distancing and to help people feel comfortable and confident using schools again.
- **Make safe space outside the school gates as large and unconstrained as possible** – even three school years attending means parents and carers will need a lot of space outside.
- **Know what problem you are trying to solve and the particular circumstances of each individual school.** This will help discuss ideas with communities and choose the most appropriate solutions.

- **Think about 3 types of action – taking traffic out, increasing safe pedestrian space, making the place more attractive.** Some schools sit on busy bus routes or streets that are vital for local movement, so they can't be fully shut at any time. In such cases widening and decluttering pavements might be the best option.
- **Be ambitious, use the current need for school streets as a stepping-stone to creating a much more useful and appealing public realm school space in the future.** But keep it simple to start and build your changes step by step.
- **Test out ideas and monitor how things work.** This is an exciting time to be able to trial and pilot things. Super important right now – TfL's new guide gives advice on gathering information
- **Prioritize where you spend your time and money.** It will be impossible to create everywhere straight away. TfL guidance provides guidance on case making and they can provide maps showing footway width outside each school in London.
- **Most schools have no parking areas outside the gate.** An easy win can be to repurpose this space for waiting/walking space. Make sure guardrail preventing access to the space is removed, and put in new barriers on the carriageway side of the parking area.